



FAIRBANKS DECLARATION

Fairbanks, Alaska, United States

12 March 2016





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Model Arctic Council Ministerial Meeting in Fairbanks, Alaska, United States
12 March 2016

FAIRBANKS DECLARATION 2016

MODEL ARCTIC COUNCIL FAIRBANKS DECLARATION

**On the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting of the Model Arctic Council
The 12th of March, 2016, Fairbanks, Alaska, United States**

Ministers representing the eight Arctic States, convening in Fairbanks, Alaska, United States for the Ministerial meeting of the Model Arctic Council, joined by the representatives of the six Permanent Participant organizations of the Model Arctic Council,

Reaffirming the commitment to maintain peace, stability and constructive cooperation in the Arctic,

Reaffirming the commitment of the Arctic states and permanent participants to respond jointly to new opportunities and challenges in the Arctic, **noting** the substantial progress the Council has made to strengthen circumpolar cooperation, and **reaffirming** the important leadership role of the Council in taking concrete action through enhanced results-oriented cooperation,

Reaffirming our commitment to sustainable development in the Arctic region, including economic and social development, improved health conditions and cultural well-being, and our commitment to the protection of the Arctic environment, including the health of Arctic ecosystems, conservation of biodiversity in the Arctic and sustainable use of natural resources, as stated in the Ottawa Declaration of 1996,

Recognizing the need for further development of measures and associated implementation strategies to protect the Arctic environment, **noting** that it plays an instrumental role in the stability of the economy of the Arctic region,

Recognizing that the Arctic is an inhabited region with diverse economies, cultures and societies, further **recognizing** the rights of the indigenous peoples and **confirming** our commitment to seek the free, prior, and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned, and also **recognizing** interests of all Arctic inhabitants, and **emphasizing** the unique role played by Arctic indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge in the Council,

Recognizing the opportunities and challenges resulting from climate change in the Arctic, including the associated uncertainties,

Confirming our commitment to make significant improvements to human health in the Arctic, including physical and mental health,

Acknowledging the 20th Anniversary and significant achievements of the Arctic Council to date, and our commitment to cooperate in the future

Hereby:

SUSTAINABLE CRUISE SHIP TOURISM

Recognize the threat and potential adverse effects of invasive species in the Arctic marine environment,

Urge the ratification of International Maritime Organization's (IMO) International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments,

Acknowledge the lack of understanding on the decomposition of waste in Arctic water,

Affirm the need for greater investment in research concerning the sustainable management of waste by cruise ships in Arctic waters,

Welcome improved dialogue between the local Arctic communities and the growing tourism industry in the Arctic region,

Recognize the importance of local community knowledge on the maritime environment, tour operations, pilotage, and in safety and security,

Acknowledge the vitality of employing indigenous peoples in positions that aid the tourism industry prior to an outside source, in order to keep small local economies sustained and engaged in the growing industry,

Address the need for a better framework for cruise ship operators and owners throughout the entire Arctic,

Encourage the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators to expand the membership to all Arctic nations beyond the current European participants and to create a more universal set of guidelines,

MANAGING MARITIME TRAFFIC FOR MARINE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Recognize the significant contribution of the IMO Polar Code, **welcomed** the IMO Secretary General's visit to the Arctic Council Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meeting in 2014 and the efforts between the two organizations to continue dialogue on Arctic safety and stewardship in the maritime environment and **acknowledge** the current state of guidance on heavy fuel oil in the Arctic,

Encourage Member States to work with the IMO to address fishing vessel activity in the next version of the Polar Code and that consideration be given to expanding the current boundary of the Polar Code to include areas which, although largely ice free, share characteristics with Arctic waters such as remoteness and environmental vulnerability,

Recalling the work conducted by Kawarek as well as the AMSA IIc report assessing ecologically and culturally sensitive areas, **develop** a framework for a pilot program to address the use of heavy fuel oil in areas of the Bering Sea region to be conducted with free, prior, and informed consent of the Arctic Council, including local communities to the area,

Establish a Task Force reporting to the SAOs on the use of alternative fuels in the Arctic, examining the current state of alternative fuel usage, the technological challenges of alternative fuel use in the Arctic, as well as infrastructure needs to implement changes,

Recognize that a higher volume of marine traffic will expand the exposure of vulnerable remote indigenous communities to illegal drug trafficking and other criminal elements,

Recommend further dialogue concerning community safety occur between the Arctic Coast Guard forum and Permanent Participants,

Note the critical needs for improving infrastructure for safe navigation in the Arctic,

Encourage Member States to continue hydrographic mapping and sharing of findings in areas of high density traffic towards improving safe navigation in maritime waterways,

Recognize the unique vulnerability and safety hazards present in the Arctic, and **recall** that several Arctic nations (U.S., Canada, Norway, Iceland) use the Notice to Mariners as a means to communicate maritime conditions to mariners,

Develop a universal Notice to Mariners system for the Arctic to share maritime conditions, based on the best available scientific information, which includes ecological data and developed especially through collaboration with Permanent Participants,

Acknowledge the role of indigenous and local communities in identifying species migration,

Acknowledge the tremendous work and recommendations put forth in the PAME 2015-2017 Work Plan, and the resulting Framework for a Pan-Arctic Network of Marine Protected Areas (MPA) (2015),

Establish an Expert Group to implement a Pan-Arctic Network of MPAs, which includes development of an agreed methodology to determine regional effectiveness of the Pan-Arctic Network of MPAs,

Note the role of MPA networks in shaping future shipping lanes,

HUMAN HEALTH AND WELL BEING IN THE ARCTIC

Affirm three central themes for the Improving Health Through Safe and Affordable Access to Household Running Water and Sewer (WASH) project: social justice, economic sustainability, and environmental protection,

Confirm a report on climate change vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies is needed pertaining to Arctic community water and sewer systems, including source water protection, to be presented to the Arctic Council following the September 2016 Sustainable Development Working Group meeting,

Confirm participation by the Member States and permanent participants at the Water Innovations for Healthy Arctic Homes (WIHAH) conference in Anchorage, Alaska, September 18-21 2016,

Reaffirm the need to establish metrics and best practices for monitoring implementation, led by the Arctic Council Permanent Participants,

Approve the presented schedule and Action Plan on the Reducing the Incidence of Suicide in Indigenous Groups – Strengths United through Networks (RISING-SUN) project,

Request that Member States will have determined funding sources to ensure participation of indigenous representatives including, but not limited to youth, healers, shamans, elders and others,

Recommend that the University of the Arctic will serve as an information-sharing platform to facilitate achieving the goals of RISING-SUN,

Approve the interim report submitted by the Arctic Human Health Expert Group, and encourage further work on the project,

Thank the United States for its Chairmanship of the Model Arctic Council during the period 2015-2017,

Welcome the offer of Finland to chair the Model Arctic Council during the period 2017-2019.

Signed by the representatives of the Model Arctic Council on the 12th of March 2016 in Fairbanks, Alaska, United States.

SIGNED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
MODEL ARCTIC COUNCIL
12TH DAY OF MARCH, 2016

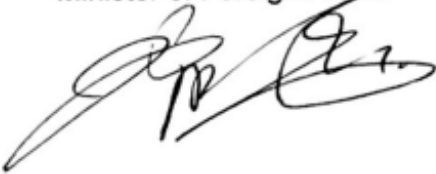
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